E/2014/22
E/C.12/2013/3

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Report on the fiftieth and fifty-first sessions

(29 April–17 May 2013, 4–29 November 2013)

Economic and Social Council

Official Records, 2014

Supplement No. 2

United Nations

E/2014/22
E/C.12/2013/3

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Report on the fiftieth and fifty-first sessions

(29 April–17 May 2013, 4–29 November 2013)

Economic and Social Council

Official Records, 2014

Supplement No. 2

United Nations
New York and Geneva, 2014

Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

E/2014/22
E/C.12/2013/3

Contents

Chapter		*Paragraphs*	*Page*
I.	Organizational and other matters	1–26	1
	A. Draft decision recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council	1–6	1
	B. States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and its Optional Protocol	7	2
	C. Sessions and agenda	8–11	3
	D. Membership and attendance	12–16	3
	E. Pre-sessional working group	17–20	4
	F. Election of officers	21	5
	G. Organization of work	22	5
	H. Next sessions	23	6
	I. Reports of States parties scheduled for consideration by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its upcoming sessions	24–26	6
II.	Overview of the present working methods of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	27–62	7
	A. General reporting guidelines	29	7
	B. Examination of the reports of States parties	30–40	7
	C. Follow-up procedure in relation to the consideration of reports	41–43	9
	D. Procedure in response to non-submitted and considerably overdue reports	44–45	10
	E. Submission of several reports in one document	46–47	11
	F. Action by the Committee with regard to information on economic, social and cultural rights received from sources other than States parties	48–53	11
	G. Day of general discussion	54	12
	H. Other consultations	55	12
	I. Participation of non-governmental organizations in the work of the Committee	56–57	13
	J. General comments	58–61	13
	K. Statements and letters adopted by the Committee	62	14
III.	Submission of reports by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant	63–65	14
IV.	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant and the situation in a State party in the absence of a report	66–68	15
V.	Activities of the Committee under the Optional Protocol	69–70	17
VI.	Substantive issues arising in the implementation of the Covenant	71	17
VII.	Additional decisions adopted and matters discussed by the Committee at its fiftieth and fifty-first sessions	72–78	17

A. Participation in intersessional meetings 72 17
B. Future general comments and statements 73–74 18
C. Working methods of the Committee 75–77 18
D. Report of the co-facilitators on the open-ended intergovernmental process to conduct open, transparent and inclusive negotiations on how to strengthen and enhance the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system 78 18
VIII. Other activities of the Committee in 2013 ..... 79 19
IX. Adoption of the report 80 19
Annexes
I. Programme budget implications related to the draft decision recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council concerning the request for additional meeting time and an increase in the composition of the pre-sessional working group of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to deal with the backlog of reports pending review under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 20
II. Members of the Committee 24
III. Agendas of the Committee at its fiftieth and fifty-first sessions 25
A. Agenda of the fiftieth session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (29 April–17 May 2013) 25
B. Agenda of the fifty-first session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (4–29 November 2013) 25
IV. Decision of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the proposed guidelines on the independence and impartiality of members of the human rights treaty bodies 27

Chapter I
Organizational and other matters

A. Draft decision recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council

Rationale

1. The Committee recalls its draft decision submitted to the Economic and Social Council (E/2012/22, para. 5) requesting approval for the extension of the two annual sessions of the Committee by one week each in 2013 and 2014 and an increase in the membership of the pre-sessional working group up to 10 members of the Committee for those sessions. That would have resulted in a total of four additional weeks of meeting time during the biennium.

2. The Committee welcomes resolution 2012/29 by which the Council approved additional meeting time and an increase in the membership for the meetings of the two pre-sessional working groups, regretting however that a total of two weeks of meeting time (one in 2013 and one in 2014) was accorded rather than the four requested. In resolution 67/246 (section VI, para. 2), the General Assembly endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/67/577, paras. 7–14), indicating that the Secretary-General should make every effort to absorb the additional requirements.

3. In its annual report for 2012, the Committee informed the Council of efforts made to increase the number of reports considered, notably by reducing the number of meetings for the consideration of each periodic report from three to two, on a trial basis (E/2012/22, para. 1).

4. In 2013, the Committee held its fiftieth session from 29 April to 17 May and its fifty-first session from 4 to 29 November, which included one additional week of meeting time. Both meetings of the pre-sessional working group in 2013 had expanded membership.

5. While noting with appreciation that the increased workload of the Committee is, inter alia, a result of the improved rate of reporting by States parties, the Committee reiterates, yet again, its concern at the persistent backlog of reports awaiting consideration (approximately 45 reports). Given that the Committee meets twice a year for only six weeks in total, it has felt severely constrained in its efforts to reduce that backlog and to consider the periodic reports of State parties in a timely manner and without undue delay. The two additional weeks granted to the Committee will allow it to consider six additional reports. However, the question of addressing the backlog remains.

6. The Committee recalls that in 2009, having been advised of the related financial implications, it decided to request that the Economic and Social Council approve one additional session per year in 2010 and 2011. This request was, however, not considered during the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in July 2009. As a result, the Committee reiterated its urgent request for additional sessions in the biennium 2011–2012. Again, the request was deferred and the Chair of the Committee was invited to report to the Economic and Social Council in July 2011. The Chair addressed the Council on 28 July 2011, informing it of the deliberations of the Committee on the issue and proposing that it consider granting the Committee an extra week per session (two weeks annually) rather than permitting it to hold one extra session. The Chair also informed the Council that the Committee had agreed, in principle, to reduce the number of meetings for

the consideration of a periodic report from three to two on a trial basis. The Chair emphasized that the Committee would only be able to reduce the backlog of reports and proceed with its work in an efficient manner if both the two extra weeks were granted and the number of meetings for consideration of a periodic report was reduced from three to two on a trial basis. The Committee therefore reiterates its request for additional meeting time and submits the draft decision below for consideration by the Council.

Draft decision

The Economic and Social Council recalls resolution 2012/29, by which it extended two additional weeks of meeting time to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, including expanded membership of two pre-sessional working groups. The Economic and Social Council further notes that the Committee has benefited from additional meeting time of one week each in 2013 and 2014, which allowed it to consider a larger number of reports, however is also aware that the number of reports pending consideration is increasing at the same pace, resulting in a stable backlog, noting that additional measures must be taken to address the backlog in a satisfactory manner.

The Economic and Social Council, concerned that existing meeting arrangements for the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights no longer permit it to fully discharge its responsibilities under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Council resolution 1985/17 in an efficient, effective and timely manner and noting that the present backlog in consideration of State party reports could be alleviated by additional meeting time, approves the extension of the two annual Committee sessions by one week each, that is two extra weeks of meeting time, in both 2015 and 2016, and expanded membership of the two existing annual pre-sessional working group meetings of one week's duration for up to 10 members of the Committee, in Geneva, in both 2015 and 2016.

This decision is taken without prejudice to the ongoing intergovernmental process on treaty body strengthening, which had not yet concluded its work at the time of the adoption of this draft decision on 29 November 2013.

B. States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and its Optional Protocol

7. As at 29 November 2013, the closing date of the fifty-first session of the Committee, 161 States were parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, following the accession of Haiti on 8 October 2013. The Covenant was adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 2200 A (XXI) of 16 December 1966 and opened for signature and ratification in New York on 19 December 1966. It entered into force on 3 January 1976, in accordance with the provisions of its article 27. The Optional Protocol to the Covenant was adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 63/117 on 10 December 2008 and was opened for signature and ratification in New York on 24 September 2009. It entered into force on 5 May 2013, three months after the date of the deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the tenth instrument of ratification. The following 11 States have ratified the Optional Protocol: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mongolia, Montenegro, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and Uruguay.

C. Sessions and agenda

8. At its twelfth session in May 1995, the Committee requested the Economic and Social Council to authorize it to hold two annual sessions, in May and November, each of three weeks' duration, and two meetings of a pre-sessional working group of five members to meet for five days immediately after each session to prepare the list of issues for consideration at the subsequent session. The Council, in its resolution 1995/39 of 25 July 1995, endorsed the recommendation of the Committee.

9. The Committee, through its draft decision submitted to the Economic and Social Council (E/2012/22, para. 5), requested approval for the extension of the two annual sessions of the Committee by one week each, that is two extra weeks of meeting time per year, and the participation in meetings of the pre-sessional working group of up to 10 members of the Committee in both 2013 and 2014. By resolution 2012/29 the Economic and Social Council approved a total of two extra weeks of meeting time (one in 2013 and one in 2014) and the participation of up to 10 members of the Committee in both pre-sessional meetings of the working group in 2013. In resolution 67/246 (section VI, para. 2), the General Assembly endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/67/577, paras. 7–14), indicating that the Secretary-General should make every effort to absorb the additional requirements.

10. In 2013, the Committee held its fiftieth session from 29 April to 17 May and its fifty-first session from 4 to 29 November, which included one additional week of meeting time. Both sessions were held at the United Nations Office at Geneva. The agenda for each session is included at annex II to the present report.

11. An account of the deliberations of the Committee at its fiftieth and fifty-first sessions is contained in the relevant summary records (E/C.12/2013/SR.1–18 and 28 and E/C.12/2013/SR.29–46 and 68, respectively).

D. Membership and attendance

12. Three new members of the Committee were welcomed at the start of the fiftieth session: Ms. Virginia Bras Gomes, Mr. Mikel Mancisidor and Ms. Lydia Ravenberg.

13. The newly elected members of the Committee made their solemn declaration on 29 April 2013, in accordance with rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the Committee.

14. A number of specialized agencies and United Nations organs and departments submitted information and observed the dialogues held during the fiftieth and fifty-first sessions.

15. The following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were represented by observers:

At the fiftieth session:

Special consultative status or roster:	ACT Alliance; Association togolaise pour les Nations Unies; Centre Europe – tiers monde; Amnesty International; General Research Institute on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Japan; Human Rights Now, Japan; International Commission of Jurists; Inuit Circumpolar Council; Japan Federation of Bar Associations; Japanese Workers Committee for Human Rights.

At the fifty-first session:

Special consultative status or roster:	Amnesty International; Arab Penal Reform Organization; Foodfirst Information and Action Network (FIAN) Austria; FIAN Belgium; FIAN International; FIAN Norway; Habitat International Coalition; International Institute for Child Protection; Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'homme (FIDH); Fondazione Marista per la Solidarietà Internazionale; Norwegian Refugee Council; The Equal Rights Trust; World Vision International.

16. Other national and international NGOs and coalitions of national NGOs were represented by observers at the fiftieth and fifty-first sessions, as follows:

(a) Fiftieth session: Citizens' Labour Rights Protection League; General Research Institute; Global Human Rights Clinic; Human Rights Association for Korean Residents in Japan; Human Rights Training and Research Public Association, Azerbaijan; Justice for Iran; Woman Inc; Working Women's Network, Japan;

(b) Fifty-first session: Al Shehab Institution for Comprehensive Development; Association of Social Workers Kuwait; Belarusian Helsinki Committee; Djibouti Civil Society Organization; Center for Economic and Social Rights, Egypt; Geneva for Human Rights; Geneva Institute for Human Rights; Global Human Rights Clinic; International Disability Alliance; Juss-Buss; KABEHR; Legal Advice for Women, Norway; National Society for the Protection of Children, Kuwait; the Protection Project at Johns Hopkins University; UNISOURDS; We Shall Overcome Foundation.

E. Pre-sessional working group

17. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1988/4 of 24 May 1988, authorized the establishment of a pre-sessional working group composed of five members of the Committee, to be appointed by the Chair of the Committee to meet for up to one week prior to each session. By decision 1990/252 of 25 May 1990, the Council authorized the meetings of the working group to be held one to three months prior to a session of the Committee.

18. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2012/29, as outlined in paragraph 12 above, in 2013 the two working groups were each composed of 10 members of the Committee.

19. The Chair of the Committee, in consultation with the members of the Bureau, designated the following individuals as members of the pre-sessional working group to meet:

Prior to the fifty-first session:

Mr. Aslan Abashidze

Ms. Virginia Bras Gomes (Chair)

Mr. Chandrashekhar Dasgupta

Mr. Zdzislaw Kedzia

Mr. Azzouz Kerdoun

Mr. Ariranga Pillay

Mr. Renato Ribeiro Leão

Mr. Nico Schrijver

Ms. Heisoo Shin

Mr. Alvaro Tirado Mejia

Prior to the fifty-second session:

Mr. Aslan Abashidze

Mr. Mohammed Abdel-Moneim

Mr. Clement Atangana

Ms. Virginia Bras Gomes

Ms. Jun Cong

Mr. Zdzislaw Kedzia

Mr. Mikel Mancisidor

Mr. Jaime Marchán Romero

Ms. Lydia Ravenberg

Mr. Waleed Sadi

20. The pre-sessional working group held its meetings at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 21 to 24 May 2013 and will hold its next meetings from 2 to 6 December 2013. All designated members of the working group attended the meetings, with the exception of Mr. Kerdoun, who was taking part in the twenty-fifth meeting of the chairs of the human rights treaty bodies from 20 to 24 May 2013 in New York. The working group identified additional issues that could be addressed to the reporting States and lists of such questions were transmitted to the permanent missions of the States concerned.

F. Election of officers

21. In accordance with rule 14 of its rules of procedure, the Committee, at the first meeting of its fiftieth session on 29 April 2013, elected the members of its Bureau, as follows:

Chair:	Mr. Zdzislaw Kedzia
Vice-Chairs:	Mr. Chandrashekhar Dasgupta
	Mr. Azzouz Kerdoun
	Mr. Renato Ribeiro Leão
Rapporteur:	Ms. Virginia Bras Gomes

G. Organization of work

22. In accordance with rule 8 of its rules of procedure, the Committee considered the provisional agenda and tentative programme of work for its fiftieth and fifty-first sessions at the first meeting of each session and approved them, as amended, during consideration.

H. Next sessions

23. In accordance with the established schedule, the fifty-second and fifty-third sessions will take place at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 28 April to 23 May 2014 and from 10 to 28 November 2014, respectively.

I. Reports of States parties scheduled for consideration by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its upcoming sessions

24. In accordance with rule 61, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure of the Committee, the reports submitted by States parties under article 16 of the Covenant are, in principle, scheduled for consideration in the order in which they have been received by the Secretary-General. As at 29 November 2013, the closing date of the fifty-first session, the Committee had received the following reports, which it decided to consider at its fifty-second and fifty-third sessions.

Fifty-second session (28 April–23 May 2014)

Armenia	E/C.12/ARM/2-3
China	E/C.12/CHN/2, E/C.12/CHN-HKG/3, E/C.12/CHN-MAC/2
Czech Republic	E/C.12/CZE/2
El Salvador	E/C.12/SLV/3-5
Indonesia	E/C.12/IDN/1
Lithuania	E/C.12/LTU/2
Monaco	E/C.12/MCO/2-3
Serbia	E/C.12/SRB/2
Ukraine	E/C.12/UKR/6
Uzbekistan	E/C.12/UZB/2

Fifty-third session (10–28 November 2014)

Finland	E/C.12/FIN/6
Guatemala	E/C.12/GTM/3
Montenegro	E/C.12/MNE/1
Nepal	E/C.12/NPL/3
Portugal	E/C.12/PRT/4
Romania	E/C.12/ROU/3-5
Slovenia	E/C.12/SVN/2
Viet Nam	E/C.12/VNM/2-4

25. The Committee has decided to look into the situation of long-overdue reports and indicates below which States have long-overdue initial reports. At present 27 States parties have initial reports overdue for submission to the Committee. Of those reports, 22 are more than 10 years overdue. The list of States parties with initial reports that are overdue by more than 10 years is as follows: Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominica, Eritrea, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Sierra Leone and Somalia.

26. As at 29 November 2013, the number of reports submitted and pending consideration before the Committee was 42.

Chapter II
Overview of the present working methods of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

27. The present chapter is aimed at providing a concise and up-to-date overview and explanation of the way in which the Committee carries out its various functions, including information about recent developments in its working methods. It is designed to make the current practice of the Committee more transparent and readily accessible to States parties and others interested in the implementation of the Covenant.

28. Since its first session in 1987, the Committee has made a concerted effort to devise appropriate working methods that adequately reflect the nature of the tasks with which it has been entrusted. In the course of its fifty-one sessions it has sought to modify and develop those methods in the light of its experience. Those methods will continue to evolve.

A. General reporting guidelines

29. The Committee attaches major importance to the need to structure the reporting process and the dialogue with the representatives of each State party in such a way as to ensure that the issues of principal concern to the State party are dealt with in a methodical and informative manner. For this purpose, in 2008 the Committee adopted revised reporting guidelines on treaty-specific documents to be submitted by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant,[1] with a view to assisting States parties in the reporting process and improving the effectiveness of the monitoring system as a whole.

B. Examination of the reports of States parties

1. Work of the pre-sessional working group

30. A pre-sessional working group meets for five days prior to each session of the Committee. It is composed of five members of the Committee nominated by the Chair, taking account of the desirability of a balanced geographical distribution and other relevant factors. However, pursuant to the request of the Committee for additional meeting time and increased membership of the working group, and its subsequent approval by the Economic

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 2* (E/2009/22-E/C.12/2008/3), annex VIII.

and Social Council in resolution 2012/29 and the General Assembly in resolution 67/246, the working groups of the two sessions in 2013 were composed of 10 members.

31. The principal purpose of the working group is to identify in advance additional questions that will assist the Committee in preparing for the dialogue with the representatives of the reporting States. The aim is to improve the efficiency of the system and to ease the task of the representatives of States parties by facilitating more focused preparations for the discussion.[2]

32. With regard to its own working methods, the working group, in the interests of efficiency, allocates to each of its members the initial responsibility for undertaking a detailed review of a specific State party report and for putting before the working group a preliminary list of issues. Each draft by a country rapporteur is revised and supplemented on the basis of observations by the other members of the working group and the final version of the list is adopted by the working group as a whole. This procedure applies equally to both initial and periodic reports.

33. In preparation for the pre-sessional working group, the Committee has asked the secretariat to place at the disposal of its members a country analysis, as well as all pertinent documents containing information relevant to each of the reports to be examined. For this purpose, the Committee invites all concerned individuals, bodies and NGOs to submit relevant and appropriate documentation to the secretariat.

34. The lists of issues drawn up by the working group are sent to the State party concerned.

2. Consideration of reports

35. In accordance with the established practice of each of the human rights treaty monitoring bodies, representatives of the reporting States should be present at the meetings of the Committee when their reports are examined, in order to ensure a constructive dialogue. The following procedure is generally observed: the representative of the State party is invited to introduce the report by making brief comments and providing any new information that may be relevant to the dialogue. The Committee then considers the report by clusters of articles (usually articles 1–5, 6–9, 10–12 and 13–15), taking particular account of the replies furnished in response to the list of issues. The Chair will normally invite questions or comments from members of the Committee and then invite the representatives of the State party to reply immediately to questions that do not require further reflection or research. Any remaining questions are taken up at a subsequent meeting or, if necessary, may be the subject of additional information provided to the Committee in writing within a given time frame. Members of the Committee are free to pursue specific issues in the light of the replies thus provided, but avoiding repetition of questions already posed or answered, or speaking for more than five minutes in any one intervention.

36. The final phase of the examination of the report by the Committee consists of the drafting and adoption of its concluding observations. With the assistance of the secretariat, the country rapporteur prepares a draft set of concluding observations for consideration by the Committee, which is circulated for comments prior to adoption. At a later stage, the Committee then discusses the draft, again in private session, with a view to adopting it by consensus.

[2] Ibid., *1988, Supplement No. 4* (E/1988/14-E/C.12/1988/4), chap. IV, para. 361.

37. The concluding observations, once formally adopted, are forwarded as soon as possible to the State party concerned and made public.

38. At its forty-sixth session in May 2011, the Committee agreed, in principle and on a temporary basis, to devote only two meetings to the consideration of periodic reports, with a view to preventing the backlog of reports pending consideration from growing, while at the same time requesting additional meeting time from the Economic and Social Council. Accordingly, at the fiftieth and fifty-first sessions, the Committee considered the periodic reports of Albania, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jamaica, Japan, Kuwait, Norway and Rwanda over two meetings only. The initial reports of Djibouti, Gabon and Togo were considered over three meetings.

3. Comments by States parties on concluding observations

39. Once the Committee has adopted its concluding observations on the report of a State party, and if the latter submits any comments thereon to the Committee, these are made public, as submitted, and listed in the annual report. Comments from States parties are published for information purposes only.

4. Postponement of the consideration of reports

40. Last-minute requests by States to postpone the consideration of a report that has been scheduled for examination at a particular session are extremely disruptive for all concerned and have in the past caused major problems for the Committee. Accordingly, the long-standing policy of the Committee is not to grant such requests and to proceed with its consideration of all scheduled reports, even in the absence of a representative of the State party concerned.

C. Follow-up procedure in relation to the consideration of reports

41. At its 53rd meeting, held on 1 December 1999 (twenty-first session), the Committee decided that:

(a) In all concluding observations, the Committee would request the State party to inform the Committee, in its next periodic report, of the steps taken to implement the recommendations in the concluding observations;

(b) Where appropriate, the Committee might, in its concluding observations, make a specific request to a State party to provide more information or statistical data at a time prior to the date on which the next periodic report is due to be submitted;

(c) Where appropriate, the Committee might, in its concluding observations, ask the State party to respond to any pressing specific issue identified in the concluding observations prior to the date on which the next report is due to be submitted;

(d) Any information provided in accordance with (b) and (c) above would be considered by the next meeting of the pre-sessional working group;

(e) In general, the pre-sessional working group could recommend that the Committee take one of the following measures:

(i) That the Committee take note of such information;

(ii) That the Committee adopt specific additional concluding observations in response to that information;

(iii) That the matter be pursued through a request for further information;

(iv) That the Chair of the Committee be authorized to inform the State party, in advance of the next session, that the Committee would take up the issue at its next session and that, for that purpose, the participation of a representative of the State party in the work of the Committee would be welcome;

(f) If the information requested in accordance with (b) and (c) above is not provided by the specified date, or is patently unsatisfactory, the Chair, in consultation with the members of the Bureau, could be authorized to follow up the matter with the State party.

42. In situations in which the Committee considers that it is unable to obtain the information it requires on the basis of the above-mentioned procedures, it may decide to adopt a different approach. In particular, the Committee may request that the State party concerned accept a visit from one or two members of the Committee.

43. This procedure has already been applied in relation to two States parties and the Committee considers the experience to have been a very positive one in both instances.

D. Procedure in response to non-submitted and considerably overdue reports

44. The Committee believes that persistent non-reporting by States parties undermines one of the foundations of the Covenant.

45. Accordingly, the Committee resolved at its sixth session to consider the situation concerning the implementation of the Covenant in respect of each State party whose reports were very significantly overdue. At its seventh session, it resolved to begin scheduling consideration of such reports at its future sessions and to notify the States parties concerned. At its thirty-sixth session, the Committee adopted the following procedure:

(a) To review three lists of States parties whose reports were overdue;

(i) States parties with reports that were due within the past 8 years;

(ii) States parties with reports that were due from 8 to 12 years previously;

(iii) States parties with reports that were due more than 12 years previously;

(b) To send reminders to States parties as follows:

(i) The first letter would be sent to all States parties about the dates on which their reports were due; those with overdue reports would be reminded and requested to submit those reports as soon as possible;

(ii) A second letter would be sent to those States parties with the most overdue reports that did not respond to the reminder, informing them that the Committee planned to consider the overdue report(s) at a specific session in the future, and requesting that those reports be submitted in sufficient time to allow a constructive dialogue to take place;

(iii) A third letter would be sent if no response was received to the second letter, confirming that the Committee would proceed to review the implementation of the Covenant in the State party, in the absence of a report, at the session communicated in the earlier letter in the light of all available information;

(c) In situations where the State party concerned indicated that a report would be provided to the Committee, and upon a request from the State party, the Chair might decide to defer consideration of the implementation of the Covenant in the State party for one session.

E. Submission of several reports in one document

46. At its 55th meeting, held on 22 November 2006 during its thirty-seventh session, the Committee reviewed the situation of overdue reports, including recent submissions of several long-overdue reports, and decided as follows:

(a) The Committee would accept from States parties that had never submitted a report under the Covenant, a one-time submission of up to three reports consolidated in a single document, in order to bring them up to date with their reporting obligations;

(b) A consolidated report should contain a general overview of important developments in relation to the implementation of the Covenant over the entire period covered by the report submitted and present up-to-date detailed information on the present situation.

47. At its 28th meeting, held on 18 May 2012, during its forty-eighth session, the Committee decided to review the situation of accepting combined reports. The Committee decided that each State party report would constitute one report rather than be considered as a combination of several reports. The Committee also decided to define the due date of the next periodic report as five years following the date of the dialogue with the State party, rather than generate due dates every five years, irrespective of the date of the submission of the report or of the dialogue. This is a temporary measure, which takes into account the delays caused by the significant backlog of reports pending consideration before the Committee.

F. Action by the Committee with regard to information on economic, social and cultural rights received from sources other than States parties

1. Information provided in connection with the consideration by the Committee of a State party report

48. The Committee also takes into account the information provided to it by sources other than the State party in connection with its consideration of a State party report. That information, being an integral part of the constructive dialogue with a State party, is made available by the secretariat to the State party concerned through the web page of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in advance of the consideration by the Committee of the report of that State party.

2. Information received following consideration by the Committee of a State party report and adoption of concluding observations

49. On various occasions in the past, the Committee has received information, mainly from NGOs, after consideration of a State party report and adoption of concluding observations thereon. In practice, this has generally been follow-up information on the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee. Not being in a position to consider and act upon such information without reopening its dialogue with a State party, the Committee will consider the information received from sources other than a State party only in cases where such information has been specifically requested in its concluding observations.

50. The Committee considers that, following its consideration of a State party report and the adoption of its concluding observations, the primary responsibility for their implementation lies with the State party, which is bound to report on measures taken in this respect to the Committee in its next periodic report. The Committee therefore recommends

that the information referred to in the preceding paragraph be submitted by the authors directly to the national competent authorities with a view to assisting them in implementing the concluding observations of the Committee.

3. Information provided with respect to non-reporting States parties

51. The Committee has also received information from international and national NGOs on the status of the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights by:

(a) States parties that have not submitted a report at all since their ratification of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and its entry into force;

(b) States parties with long-overdue periodic reports.

52. In both cases, the failure of States parties to comply with their obligations under the Covenant, and in particular with their reporting obligations, has made it impossible for the Committee to monitor effectively the implementation by those States of the economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the Covenant, in accordance with the mandate conferred on the Committee by the Economic and Social Council.

53. At its thirtieth session in May 2003, the Committee, in a spirit of open and constructive dialogue with States parties, decided that, in both the cases referred to above, the Committee might, through a letter from the Chair, bring to the attention of the State party concerned the information received and urge the State party to submit its overdue report without further delay, addressing the issues raised in the submissions of NGOs. That letter would also be made available to the NGOs concerned upon request.

G. Day of general discussion

54. The Committee may decide to devote one day of a session, usually the Monday of the third week, to a general discussion of a particular right or a particular aspect of the Covenant. The purpose is threefold: such a general discussion assists the Committee in developing in greater depth its shared understanding of the relevant issues; it enables the Committee to encourage inputs into its work from all interested parties; and it helps the Committee to lay the basis for a future general comment.

H. Other consultations

55. The Committee has sought to coordinate its work with that of other bodies to the greatest extent possible and to draw as widely as it can on available expertise in the fields of its competence. The Committee has also sought to draw on the expertise of the relevant specialized agencies and United Nations bodies, both in its work as a whole and, more particularly, in the context of its general discussions. It has also consistently invited individuals, such as special procedures mandate holders of the Human Rights Council, the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, and chairs of the working groups and other bodies of the Council and the Commission, to address it and engage in discussions.

I. Participation of non-governmental organizations in the work of the Committee

56. In order to ensure that the Committee is as well-informed as possible, it provides opportunities for NGOs to submit relevant information to it.[3] They may do so in writing at any time prior to the consideration of the report of a given State party. The pre-sessional working group is also open to the submission of information in person or in writing from any NGO, provided that it relates to matters on the agenda of the working group. In addition, as of November 2012, the Committee sets aside part of the first two (or three) Mondays at each of its sessions to enable representatives of NGOs to provide oral information. Such information should: (a) focus specifically on the provisions of the Covenant; (b) be of direct relevance to matters under consideration by the Committee; (c) be credible; (d) not be abusive. The relevant meeting is open and provided with interpretation and press services.

57. The Committee has requested the secretariat to ensure that written information formally submitted to it by NGOs in relation to the consideration of a specific State party report is made available as soon as possible to the representatives of the State party concerned. Prior to a session, this is normally done by posting it on the OHCHR website. The Committee therefore assumes that if any of this information is referred to during the dialogue with the State party, the latter will already be aware of the information.

J. General comments

58. In response to an invitation addressed to it by the Economic and Social Council, the Committee decided to begin, as from its third session, the preparation of general comments on the various rights and provisions of the Covenant, in particular with a view to assisting States parties to fulfil their obligations under the Covenant. As at 29 November 2013, the Committee had adopted 21 general comments (E/2013/22, annex III, and www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cescr/pages/cescrindex.aspx).

59. Through its general comments, the Committee endeavours to make the experience gained through examination of the reports of States parties available for the benefit of all States parties, in order to assist and promote the further implementation of the Covenant; draw their attention to inadequacies disclosed by a large number of reports; suggest improvements in the reporting procedures; and encourage States parties, international organizations and the specialized agencies concerned to achieve progressively and effectively the full realization of the rights recognized in the Covenant. Whenever necessary, the Committee may, in the light of the experience of States parties and of the conclusions drawn therefrom, revise and update its general comments.

60. At its twenty-first session, the Committee adopted the outline for drafting general comments on specific rights enshrined in the Covenant.[4] The Committee agreed that the subject matter of a particular general comment would influence the overall structure of that comment and observed that the outline was not intended to be strictly adhered to. However, the outline provided useful signposts and a checklist of issues to be considered in the process of drafting a general comment. In this respect, the outline would assist in ensuring consistency in the content, format and ambit of general comments to be adopted by the

[3] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 2* (E/2001/22-E/C.12/2000/21), annex V.

[4] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 2* (E/2000/22-E/C.12/1999/11 and Corr.1), annex IX.

Committee. The Committee emphasized the importance of ensuring that general comments were reader-friendly, of reasonable length and readily understandable to a broad range of readers, primarily States parties to the Covenant. The outline would assist in ensuring consistency and clarity in the structure of the general comments, thus promoting their accessibility, and strengthening the authoritative interpretation of the Covenant provided by the Committee through its general comments.

61. At its fiftieth session, the Committee entrusted Mr. Ribeiro Leão with the task of reviewing the format of the general comments, taking into account past experience and present challenges in drafting them.

K. Statements and letters adopted by the Committee

62. With a view to assisting States parties to the Covenant, the Committee adopts statements to clarify and confirm its position with respect to major international developments and issues bearing upon the implementation of the Covenant. As at 29 November 2013, the Committee had adopted 21 statements (E/2013/22, annex IV, and http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cescr/pages/cescrindex.aspx).

Chapter III
Submission of reports by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant

63. In accordance with rule 58 of its rules of procedure, the Committee, at its 29th meeting on 4 November 2013, considered the status of submission of reports under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant.

64. In that connection, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Note by the Secretary-General on the revised general guidelines regarding the form and contents of reports to be submitted by States parties (E/C.12/2008/2);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General on the States parties to the Covenant and the status of submission of reports as at 15 July 2013 (E/C.12/51/2).

65. The Secretary-General informed the Committee that, in addition to the reports scheduled for consideration by the Committee at its fiftieth and fifty-first sessions (see paras. 66 and 67 below), between 2 December 2012 and 29 November 2013 he had received the following reports submitted under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant by States parties:

The initial reports of Burundi (E/C.12/BDI/1) and Uganda (E/C.12/UGA/1); the second to fifth periodic reports of Kenya (E/C.12/KEN/2–5); the third periodic report of Yemen (E/C.12/YEM/3); the fourth periodic reports of Morocco (E/C.12/MAR/4), Iraq (E/C.12/IRQ/4) and France (E/C.12/FRA/4); and the sixth periodic report of Sweden (E/C.12/SWE/6).

Chapter IV
Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant and the situation in a State party in the absence of a report

66. At its fiftieth session, the Committee examined the following reports submitted by seven States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant:

Initial report	
Togo	E/C.12/TGO/1
Second periodic report	
Islamic Republic of Iran	E/C.12/IRN/2
Combined second to fourth periodic reports	
Rwanda	E/C.12/RWA/2-4
Third periodic report	
Azerbaijan	E/C.12/AZE/3
Japan	E/C.12/JPN/3
Combined third and fourth periodic reports	
Jamaica	E/C.12/JAM/3-4
Fifth periodic report	
Denmark	E/C.12/ DNK/5

67. At its fifty-first session, the Committee examined the following reports submitted by 10 States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant:

Initial report	
Gabon	E/C.12/GAB/1
Combined initial and second periodic reports	
Djibouti	E/C.12/DJI/1-2
Second periodic report	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	E/C.12/BIH/2
Kuwait	E/C.12/KWT/2
Combined second and third periodic reports	
Albania	E/C.12/ALB/2-3
Combined second, third and fourth periodic reports	
Egypt	E/C.12/EGY/2-4
Fourth periodic report	
Austria	E/C.12/AUT/4

Belgium	E/C.12/BEL/4
Combined fourth to sixth periodic reports	
Belarus	E/C.12/BLR/4-6
Fifth periodic report	
Norway	E/C.12/NOR/5

68. At its eighth session, the Committee decided to discontinue its practice of including in its annual report summaries of the consideration of country reports. Reference is made, in this regard, to the relevant summary records of the meetings of the Committee at which the reports were considered. The Committee prepared concluding observations on each of the reports considered. The concluding observations listed below are accessible at http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cescr/pages/cescrindex.aspx and on the official document system of the United Nations. In accordance with established Committee practice, members do not take part in the dialogue with the delegation, the drawing up or the adoption of the concluding observations relating to the report of their own country.

Fiftieth session concluding observations

State Party	*Symbol*
Azerbaijan	E/C.12/AZE/CO/3
Denmark	E/C.12/DNK/CO/5
Islamic Republic of Iran	E/C.12/IRN/CO/2
Jamaica	E/C.12/JAM/CO/3-4
Japan	E/C.12/JPN/CO/3
Rwanda	E/C.12/RWA/CO/2-4
Togo	E/C.12/TGO/CO/1

Fifty-first session concluding observations

State party	*Symbol*
Albania	E/C.12/ALB/CO/2-3
Austria	E/C.12/AUT/CO/4
Belarus	E/C.12/BLR/CO/4-6
Belgium	E/C.12/BEL/CO/4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	E/C.12/BIH/CO/2
Djibouti	E/C.12/DJI/CO/1-2
Egypt	E/C.12/EGY/CO/2-4
Gabon	E/C.12/GAB/CO/1
Kuwait	E/C.12/KWT/CO/2
Norway	E/C.12/NOR/CO/5

Chapter V
Activities of the Committee under the Optional Protocol

69. At its fiftieth session the Committee was privileged to welcome the entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Covenant, following the deposit of the required ratifications by 10 States. At the invitation of Portugal, representing the Group of Friends of the Optional Protocol, the Committee celebrated the new instrument. On the same day, the High Commissioner addressed the Committee, reiterating the support of her Office for the Committee in undertaking the tasks arising from this new instrument. The Chair of the Committee then made a statement highlighting the opportunities and challenges provided by the Optional Protocol. A member of the Committee was also present at an event in New York co-organized by OHCHR, Portugal and Uruguay, to which representatives of all permanent missions were invited.

70. At its fifty-first session, the Committee established a five-member working group for communications, with representation from each regional group as follows: Mr. Abashidze, Mr. Atangana, Mr. Mancisidor, Mr. Ribeiro Leão and Ms. Shin. The Committee also held a brief exchange of views with the Petitions Unit regarding their experience with communications received by other treaty bodies.

Chapter VI
Substantive issues arising in the implementation of the Covenant

Cooperation with specialized agencies: informal meeting with the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labour Organization

71. During its fifty-first session, on 27 November 2013, the Committee held its annual informal meeting with the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labour Organization (ILO), which was joined by the Working Group on Business and Human Rights. The meeting, which was the eleventh meeting between the two monitoring bodies and the Working Group, was aimed at further enhancing cooperation and exchanging views on issues of mutual interest. It was once again hosted by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. On this occasion, the focus of the discussions was "Economic, social and cultural rights and the role of the corporate sector". The speakers sought to highlight in particular some of the key challenges; the means available to the respective bodies; and the modalities of how best to address the challenges in this area. Appreciation was expressed by all participants for the opportunity to learn more about each other's work and to continue to exchange views.

Chapter VII
Additional decisions adopted and matters discussed by the Committee at its fiftieth and fifty-first sessions

A. Participation in intersessional meetings

72. Members of the Committee continued to participate in, and/or contribute in different capacities to, initiatives for a better understanding and implementation of the Covenant,

promoted by different stakeholders. Requests for such participation are addressed to the members either directly or through the secretariat.

B. Future general comments and statements

73. The Committee will pursue work on the general comment related to article 7 of the Covenant on just and favourable conditions of work. Ms. Bras Gomes and Mr. Ribeiro Leão were appointed as rapporteurs for this general comment. It was further decided at the fiftieth session that Ms. Shin would explore the desirability and/or modalities of pursuing work on a general comment on the right to sexual and reproductive health and report back to the Committee at its fifty-first session. At the fifty-first session, Ms. Shin reported back to the Committee with options for consideration, following which the Committee entrusted her with the task of working on the general comment. The Committee further designated Ms. Shin as the focal point of the Committee for a possible joint statement of treaty bodies on this issue within the framework of the operational review of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. Finally, regarding proposals for other general comments put forward by Committee members, it was decided that they would not be formally initiated at this stage, although those members were free to conduct research and gather information for a future discussion.

74. Regarding proposals for other general comments noted above, the Committee agreed to proposals from its members to carry out background research on article 15, paragraph 1 (b) on the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications, (rapporteurs Mr. Mancisidor and Mr. Marchan Romero); on State obligations in the context of corporate activities (rapporteur Mr. Kedzia) and on the pertinence of the Covenant rights to the environment and development (rapporteur Mr. Schrijver).

C. Working methods of the Committee

75. The Committee continued discussions related to its working methods during the session.

76. Regarding the time allocated for briefings to the Committee, the Committee agreed to allow time for interaction with civil society, United Nations bodies and other partners, on the first two to three Mondays of the session. This is related to the higher number of reports being considered at each session and in accordance with practices observed by other treaty-monitoring bodies. The Committee is of the view that this will contribute to increasing the impact of the reporting process at the national level through the increased engagement of national-level stakeholders before and after its consideration of State party reports.

77. The Committee further discussed the guidelines on the independence and impartiality of members of the human rights treaty bodies, (Addis Ababa guidelines, A/67/222, annex I). In this regard, the Committee adopted a decision at its fifty-first session, which is reproduced in annex IV to the present report.

D. Report of the co-facilitators on the open-ended intergovernmental process to conduct open, transparent and inclusive negotiations on how to strengthen and enhance the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system

78. The Committee discussed the report containing the deliberations and recommendations arising from the intergovernmental process, including an exchange of

views of the co-facilitators on the draft elements for a resolution (A/67/995). The Committee took note of the proposals for the harmonization of working methods on which it has been continuously working. However, it expressed its concern at certain aspects of the proposals which would negatively affect its status and effective compliance with its duties. In particular, it highlighted the following concerns in this regard: replacement of the existing procedure for election of members of the Committee; the request to OHCHR to include a number of elements in the documentation prepared for the election of members of treaty bodies at meetings of States parties; the differing number of weeks of total meeting time for the various treaty bodies; the change in the rules for travel arrangements for treaty body experts; and the possibility of the further development of guidelines for the independence and impartiality of members of treaty bodies. The Committee requested the Chair to transmit its concerns to the chairs of the human rights treaty bodies at their annual meeting and, through them, to the co-facilitators.

Chapter VIII
Other activities of the Committee in 2013

Informal discussions on corporate actors

79. The members of the Committee were invited to an informal discussion with other experts on the engagement of corporate actors with the Committee, which was held on 23 May 2013 and organized by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. In addition to members of the Committee and representatives of the Foundation, participants included representatives of the Foodfirst Information and Action Network (FIAN), the Graduate Institute of the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, the International Commission of Jurists, ILO and OHCHR.

Chapter IX
Adoption of the report

80. At its 68th meeting, held on 29 November 2013, the Committee considered its draft report to the Economic and Social Council on the work of its fiftieth and fifty-first sessions. The Committee adopted the report as amended during the discussions.

Annexes

Annex I

Programme budget implications related to the draft decision recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council concerning the request for additional meeting time and an increase in the composition of the pre-sessional working group of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to deal with the backlog of reports pending review under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

1. At its fifty-first session in November 2013, the Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights reiterated its concern at the persistent backlog of reports awaiting consideration (approximately 45 reports). In light of the fact that the Committee only meets twice a year, it has felt severely constrained in its efforts to reduce the backlog and thus to consider the periodic reports of States parties in a timely manner. The Committee welcomed the two weeks of additional meeting time granted to it in 2013 and 2014, noting that this only prevented the backlog from increasing. For this reason, the Committee made a request in the form of a draft decision in its annual report (E/2014/22–E/C.12/2013/3), for one additional week per session during the period 2015–2016 and an increase in the composition of the pre-sessional working group up to 10 members instead of the current 5. This would allow the Committee to consider approximately five additional reports per year, taking an average estimate of 2.5 reports per week.

A. Relationship of the proposed decision to the strategic framework for the period 2014–2015 and the programme of work contained in the programme budget for the bienniums 2014–2015 and 2016–2017

2. The activities to be carried out relate to Programme 1, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs and Conference Management, Part B, Conference Services, Geneva, and subprogramme 2, Supporting human rights treaty bodies, of Programme 19, Human Rights. They also fall under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs and Conference Management; Section 24, Human Rights; and Section 29F, Administration, Geneva, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014–2015.

3. Provisions have been made in the programme budget for the biennium 2014–2015 for the travel and per diem costs of the 18 members of the Committee to attend its two annual regular sessions of 15 working days each and, following each session, a 5-day pre-sessional working group meeting of five members, as well as for substantive, conference and support services to the Committee and the pre-sessional working group.

B. Activities by which the requests would be implemented

4. The provision of additional resources called for in the draft decision referred to in paragraph 1 above, would allow the Committee to consider a greater number of reports.

With its present secretariat support, the Committee considers approximately 14 reports per year, spread over two sessions. An average of 18 new reports are received each year for consideration by the Committee. As a result, the backlog is not diminishing. The average time between the receipt of a report and its consideration by the Committee is as much as four years.

5. In order to reduce the backlog of reports, the Committee requests the Economic and Social Council to provide it with additional resources for both 2015 and 2016 in order for it to consider a larger number of reports.

6. Should the Economic and Social Council approve the request of the Committee, additional general temporary assistance resources would be required to provide for one P-3 position for seven months each year. Based on experience, on average, one professional staff member would need six weeks (30 working days) to assist the Committee with the review of one report. This entails research and analysis; assisting the Committee with the drafting of lists of issues and concluding observations, taking into account the jurisprudence of the Committee and that of other international and regional bodies; assistance to the Rapporteur of the Committee; finalization of the final text of the list of issues and concluding observations, as appropriate; follow-up as required and servicing the meetings of the respective sessions of the Committee. The review of five reports would thus require at least 30 weeks of work by professional staff each year, resulting in one P-3 position for approximately 7 months.

7. Additional documentation would also be required over the two-year period, comprising a total of an estimated 1,850 additional pages of pre-session, in-session and post-session documentation, in the working languages of the Committee, spread over the four sessions in 2015 and 2016.

8. The additional meeting time would not incur additional travel costs, however daily subsistence allowance for the 18 members of the Committee for one additional week per session would be required. Furthermore, daily subsistence allowance would also be required for five additional participants of the pre-sessional working group.

9. The additional requirements referred to above relate to section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management and section 24, Human Rights; and Section 29F, Administration, Geneva of the programme budget for the biennium 2014–2015 and the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017.

C. Estimated resource requirements

1. Conference-servicing requirements

10. It is estimated that additional conference-servicing requirements of $1,004,500 would arise for 2015, including $994,900 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management and $9,600 under section 29F, Administration, Geneva of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014–2015. The related requirements of $1,004,500 for 2016 would arise under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017. The table below sets out the details of these requirements.

Table 1
Conference-servicing requirements

Programme budget	*2015*	*2016*	***Total***
Section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management			
I. Interpretation	177 300	177 300	**354 600**
II. Pre-session documentation	546 800	546 800	**1 093 600**
III. In-session documentation	38 200	38 200	**76 400**
IV. Summary records	129 200	129 200	**258 400**
V. Post-session documentation	82 700	82 700	**165 400**
VI. Other conference services	20 700	20 700	**41 400**
Subtotal section 2	**994 900**	**994 900**	**1 989 800**
Section 29F, Administration, Geneva			
VII. Support services requirements	9 600	9 600	**19 200**
Subtotal section 29F	**9 600**	**9 600**	**19 200**
Total	**1 004 500**	**1 004 500**	**2 009 000**

2. Non-conference-servicing requirements

11. It is also estimated that for 2015 the amount of $198,700 would be required under section 24, Human Rights, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014–2015, including $105,700 under general temporary assistance at the P-3 level for 7 work months and $93,000 for daily subsistence allowance for the 18 members of the Committee and for 5 additional members of the pre-sessional working group. The same amount of $198,700 would be required for 2016 under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017.

12. Should the Council adopt the draft decision, the total additional requirements relating to the additional workload to eliminate a backlog of 10 reports would amount to $2,406,400: $1,203,200 for 2015 under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014–2015 and $1,203,200 for 2016 under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017, as detailed in the table below.

Table 2
Non-conference-servicing requirements

Programme budget	*2015*	*2016*	***Total***
Section 24, Human rights			
General temporary assistance, 1 P-3 for 7 months per year	105 700	105 700	**211 400**
DSA for 18 members for 1 additional week per session	72 800	72 800	**145 600**
DSA for 5 additional members for 1 week of pre-sessional meetings twice a year	20 200	20 200	**40 400**
Subtotal section 24	**198 700**	**198 700**	**397 400**
Section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management			
Processing of documentation and interpretation	994 900	994 900	**1 989 800**
Subtotal section 2	**994 900**	**994 900**	**1 989 800**

Programme budget	*2015*	*2016*	***Total***
Section 29F, Administration, Geneva			
Support services requirements	9 600	9 600	**19 200**
Subtotal section 29F	**9 600**	**9 600**	**19 200**
Total	**1 203 200**	**1 203 200**	**2 406 400**

D. Potential for absorption

13. No provisions for the additional resources requested above have been included under the programme budget for the biennium 2014–2015 and it is not anticipated that that additional appropriations of $1,203,200 for 2015 could be met from within the resources of the programme budget for the biennium 2014–2015.

E. Contingency fund

14. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditure derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under this procedure, if additional expenditure is proposed that exceeds the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned will be implemented only through the redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or the modification of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities have to be deferred to a later biennium.

F. Summary

15. Should the draft decision be adopted by the Council, additional resources in the total amount of $1,203,200 would be required under the programme budget for the biennium 2014–2015, including $994,900 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs and Conference Management, $198,700 under section 24, Human Rights, and $9,600 under section 29F, Administration, Geneva. This would represent a charge against the contingency fund and, as such, would require additional appropriations of $1,203,200 for the biennium 2014–2015 to be approved by the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session. The amount of $1,203,200 for 2016 would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017.

Annex II

Members of the Committee

Name	*Nationality*	*Term expires on 31 December*
Mr. Aslan **Abashidze**	Russian Federation	2014
Mr. Mohamed Ezzeldin **Abdel-Moneim**	Egypt	2016
Mr. Clement **Atangana**	Cameroon	2014
Ms. Maria Virginia **Bras Gomes** (Rapporteur)	Portugal	2014
Ms. Jun **Cong**	China	2016
Mr. Chandrashekhar **Dasgupta** (Vice-Chair)	India	2014
Mr. Azzouz **Kerdoun** (Vice-Chair)	Algeria	2014
Mr. Zdzislaw **Kedzia** (Chair)	Poland	2016
Mr. Mikel **Mancisidor**	Spain	2016
Mr. Jaime **Marchan Romero**	Ecuador	2014
Mr. Sergei **Martynov**	Belarus	2016
Mr. Ariranga Govindasamy **Pillay**	Mauritius	2016
Mr. Renato Zerbini **Ribeiro Leão** (Vice-Chair)	Brazil	2014
Ms. Lydia Carmelita **Ravenberg**	Suriname	2016
Mr. Waleed **Sadi**	Jordan	2016
Mr. Nicolaas **Schrijver**	Netherlands	2016
Ms. Heisoo **Shin**	Republic of Korea	2014
Mr. Alvaro **Tirado Mejia**	Colombia	2014

Annex III

Agendas of the Committee at its fiftieth and fifty-first sessions

A. Agenda of the fiftieth session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (29 April–17 May 2013)

1. Election of the Chair and other officers of the Committee.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Organization of work.
4. Substantive issues arising in the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
5. Follow-up to the consideration of reports under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant.
6. Relations with United Nations organs and other treaty bodies.
7. Consideration of reports:
   (a) Reports submitted by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant;
   (b) Reports submitted by specialized agencies in accordance with article 18 of the Covenant.
8. Submission of reports by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant.
9. Formulation of suggestions and recommendations of a general nature based on the consideration of reports submitted by States parties to the Covenant and by the specialized agencies.
10. Miscellaneous matters.

B. Agenda of the fifty-first session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (4–29 November 2013)

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Organization of work.
3. Substantive issues arising in the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
4. Follow-up to the consideration of reports under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant.
5. Relations with United Nations organs and other treaty bodies.
6. Consideration of reports:
   (a) Reports submitted by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant;

(b) Reports submitted by specialized agencies in accordance with article 18 of the Covenant.

7. Submission of reports by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant.

8. Formulation of suggestions and recommendations of a general nature based on the consideration of reports submitted by States parties to the Covenant and by the specialized agencies.

9. Miscellaneous matters.

Annex IV

Decision of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the proposed guidelines on the independence and impartiality of members of the human rights treaty bodies

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, acting upon its decision of 30 November 2012 on the proposed guidelines on the independence and impartiality of members of the human rights treaty bodies (the Addis Ababa guidelines, E/2013/22, annex VIII), further discussed the guidelines during its fifty-first session in November 2013.

The Committee, acting in the spirit of the Addis Ababa guidelines, decided to elaborate guidelines on the independence and impartiality of its members, building on its rules of procedure and practice.